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# CONTEMPORARY ECHOES

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## LET MASSACHUSETTS LEAD

*(From The Boston Transcript)*

At the dinner tendered Lord Reading by the Lotos Club a fortnight or more ago, Colonel George Harvey made a suggestion pertinent to the times which has not found favor with professional politicians of either party. On that account it has attracted all the more attention among the people to whom "nothing else matters until the war is won." The suggestion was that the usual campaign preceding the election of a new House of Representatives, which the Constitution fixes for November next, be abandoned, to the end that the people might be spared the annoyance of the blare of partisan trumpets and give ear only to counsel and constructive criticism intended to speed up the conduct of the war and hasten the day of victory. The election must be held, but the campaign could easily become so nominal that the mass of the people would pay little attention to it and content themselves only with an examination of the records on the war of the candidates seeking reelection. No congressman who has opposed either directly or indirectly the vigorous prosecution of the war since the declaration of hostilities ought to be reelected. The number of those is not large and it ought not to require a campaign from coast to coast to defeat them. Concentration upon the opponents of the war and its left-handed supporters would accomplish the desired result of weeding these men out of Congress and replacing them with duly qualified citizens to whom the winning of the war as swiftly as possible is the paramount purpose of their lives.

Fortunately for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, its representation in both houses of Congress is without any taint of disloyalty, and it includes no cuckoos. Of the sixteen congressmen in the House, fifteen will be candidates for re-election. They are Representatives Treadway, Gillett, Paige, Winslow, Rogers, Lufkin, Dallinger, Tinkham, Greene and Walsh, Republicans; and Representatives Phelan, Tague, Gallivan and Olney, Democrats; and Representative Fuller, Independent. Representative Carter, Republican, will retire from Congress at the end of his term, and therefore his successor must be chosen. So far as the fifteen candidates for re-election are concerned, however—the Republicans and the Democrats—we can think of no good reason why the suggestion of Colonel Harvey should not be adopted by the people of Massachusetts. The traditional policies of peace times upon which the parties divide are not uppermost in the mind of the electorate today, but have very properly been subordinated to policies that concern the conduct of the war. The

Democratic members of the delegation, as well as the Republican members, have not abandoned their allegiance to their country and set up in its place an allegiance to the administration. Their loyalty has been loyalty to the Government and not to the personality of any member of the administration. This is not to say that every member of the delegation has been wise in all of his criticisms or in all of his compliments, but no member of the delegation has ceased to function as a congressman or is guilty today of uttering the cuckoo cry "Don't criticize—energize," a slogan of cowardice which is the successor of "Safety First" in the lexicon of national self-abasement.

In other years it will be possible to strengthen the delegation by the election of a number of men better qualified for congressional service. We can well afford to make loyalty the acid test this year—loyalty to congressional responsibility, the loyalty of intelligence and courage. Such a test the Massachusetts members of the House of Representatives, both Republicans and Democrats, can pass. What is true of the Massachusetts congressmen is true of the Massachusetts senators. In Lodge and Weeks the Commonwealth has two representatives in the Upper House of Congress whose fearless pressure for maximum efficiency in the conduct of the war is daily felt at both ends of Pennsylvania avenue. To recall either one would be worse than a loss to Massachusetts; it would be a disadvantage to the nation.

Massachusetts may well lead in the adoption of Colonel Harvey's timely suggestion by serving notice on the professional politicians to keep out of this State this year, and by re-electing the whole Massachusetts delegation at Washington in recognition of the loyalty with which they have supported the prosecution of the war, opposed its misconduct wherever they believed they found misconduct, and stood by the Government in its every forward step toward victory. Let us keep these men on the job until the war is won or until one of them falls a victim to the sneaking hope of a premature peace. The professional politicians will not welcome the idea that this is an off year for them. But this is the people's war; they will pay its costs; they are the only sovereigns in this country. Their representatives at Washington are their head servants and nothing more.

## DOWN WITH NINCOMPOOPISM!

*(From The Louisville Courier-Journal)*

The President spoke well at Baltimore, as, barring an occasional slip of tongue, he speaks everywhere and always. The born pacifist finds it hard to change himself into a warrior. But Woodrow Wilson was not born a pacifist. He accepted pacifism as a part of the gospel of Sweetness and Light to which he became a convert during his literary salad days and has pursued it professionally as President of the United States.

He has learned the needful lesson in the White House. His present answer to the gage of battle thrown down by the Kaiser leaves nothing to be added or desired. It aroused the listening Marylanders to a high pitch of enthusiasm. . . .

The President has gotten bravely over the conceit that we are fighting only the autocracy, headed by Billy Be Dam'd, and his militarist Blood Tubs, not the German people; to Hell with them, along with the Hohenzollerns! Forced by Germany to take up arms in defense of all we hold near and dear, we are fighting to shield our wives and children from the defiling hand of the Germans. We are fighting to protect our homes from a beast that knows no mercy, a beast whose lust is destruction. We are fighting to preserve the institutions we love, the liberty we cherish, the freedom that belongs to us. We are fighting in France because it is there we can strike the enemy, but if we are defeated in France we shall be conquered in America; no longer freemen, but slaves of the most merciless and brutal taskmaster the world has known. Nor is it true that for the German people we have no feeling of hate. As George Harvey truly says, "you can no more separate the German Government from the German people than you can separate the bite of the mad dog from his blood," proceeding to show that the wickedness and infamy of the German people is in their blood; and the corruption and poison of their blood that have made them—not a small class or a caste, not their rulers alone, but the whole people—a nation of savages; and then, writing in *THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW*, he says:

Nor is it true that the Prussian alone is guilty. The brutality of the Prussian cannot be exceeded, for that were impossible, by Bavarian or Saxon, but in the refinement of their cruelty, their beastliness, their inhumanity, between North and South German there is little choice.

With this premise established our duty lies clear before us.

Our duty is to kill Germans. To the killing of Germans we must bend all our energies. We must think in terms of German dead, killed by rifles in American hands, by bombs thrown by American youths, by shells fired by American gunners. The more Germans we kill the fewer American graves there will be in France; the more Germans we kill the less danger to our wives and daughters; the more Germans we kill the sooner we shall welcome home our gallant lads. Nothing else now counts. There is no thought other than this, no activity apart from the duty forced upon us by Germany. The most highly civilized nations are united as they never were before, actuated by the same impulse. In England, France and Italy, among the English speaking peoples of the new world, under the southern cross and on the torrid plains, they, like us, see their duty clear. It is, we repeat, to kill Germans.

That is the way to "spit it out." To the devil with the sensibilities of those nincompoops who waste their sympathies over the sufferings of the lobster as his complexion turns from dirty blue into delicate pink, while they are unmoved by the misery of the Belgians and the French. Down with nincompoopism! The millions of easy-going Americans, flattering themselves they are Christians because they feel no hate, to whom the war has as yet no meaning, need to be aroused to a realization of what the war means, not only to them, but to their men; that it is the lives of their men against the lives of Germans.

"We do not know how many Germans we have yet to kill," says George Harvey, to which the *Courier-Journal* suggests a million, or more, nor all of them on the battlefield, for there are hundreds, maybe thousands, of spies and secret agents, who must likewise be looked after.

Nor an end of the war until the Stars and Stripes float over Potsdam, until the boys in khaki are quartered in Berlin and have made Unter den Linden their own, until Bill the Damned hangs from a cross-

bar in front of the Schloss, and justice has been rendered by the German nation and people—ample, pecuniary justice—to Serbia, Belgium and France.

### “UNANIMOUS CONSENT”

*(From The Evening Mail)*

Our good friend Colonel George Harvey and others who are urging the election of senators and congressmen next fall on a unanimous consent platform—that is, by agreement of Republicans and Democrats on candidates—ignore the fact that this was never intended to be, and is not now, a unanimous-consent government.

Ours is a government by parties—by political division of the people. It has never been better governed than when the party in power found itself faced in Congress by a spirited, critical minority; it has never been more poorly governed than when the party in power has had an overwhelming majority in Congress, and King Caucus, backed by executive decree, has legislated by steam-roller.

We are not to forget—indeed, in these days we must not forget—that the preamble to our constitution begins “We, the people of the United States \* \* \*” The people have many opinions. They view events great and small from many angles. Every citizen is entitled to express himself as he believes to be for the best interest of the government. Sound thinking for the country is not confined to Washington, whether in the White House or in Congress; the truest interpretation of the aspirations and purposes of our nation comes from the ballot box. Take it by and large, as we look back through our century and a quarter of years, our election figures from time to time have pointed the way to our destinies more wisely, more safely, than have the voices of our statesmen.

Election day is our day of judgment by the people. It is the bulwark of our government, the best anchor we can tie to. It is never more so than in times of stress. It must be free from manipulation by two-party agreements. We must have a free Congress if we are to have a real Congress. Republicans and Democrats are one in the resolve to fight this war to a victorious finish, whether it takes one year or ten; but Republicans and Democrats may differ greatly as to the conduct of the war. In so doing, provided their differences are based on honest and broad grounds, they really help win the war. They uncover mistakes before mistakes prove disastrous; they make optimism justify itself, instead of leaving it to run riot in imagination.

President Wilson has had a more solid support from Republican senators and congressman than any President has ever had in war time from political opponents. He has had a more helpful, broader support from Republicans than he has had from his own party. He has been more bitterly assailed by Democrats than by others; and he has assailed Democrats—the latest his friend Senator Chamberlain—more bitterly than he has assailed Republicans. At the same time, Republicans have not hesitated to call attention to the weaknesses—some inevitable, others not inevitable—of the administration’s methods, plans and delays. It cannot be truthfully said that the criticisms from the Republican side have been captious, petty or not well based. Men of the type of Senator

Lodge have remained silent under great pressure from war conditions to speak the truth to the country. They have waited hopefully for a change for the better; they have resisted demand after demand to make known the facts before them; they spoke only when silence had become a menace to the true interest of our country.

Such an opposition is an inspiration to good government, to responsible leadership. It ought to be welcomed, not opposed, by those in authority. Whether it is welcomed or not, the people, we may be sure, will insist upon it. No combination of party managers, if one should be attempted, could avail against the popular determination to have Congress what it was intended to be—the free expression of the people's desires and opinions.

## THE "STAATSZEITUNG" AND THE CONSTITUTION

*(From The Staatszeitung)*

Colonel George Harvey, who so ably edits THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW, can lay claim to inclusion among our most distinguished citizens. Yet, even he is neither "two-thirds of both Houses" of the Congress nor "the Legislatures of three-fourths of the several states." A certain presumption might consequently attach to the Colonel's attempt personally to amend the Constitution of the United States by passing over the Congressional elections this autumn, were his motives for the suggestion not so patently good. Colonel Harvey apparently looks with apprehension upon a change of Congressional complexion that might lessen the earnest coöperation between the Capitol and the White House in the prosecution of the war. The Colonel worries needlessly—even dangerously, when his worries move him to so very radical a suggestion as that which he made at the dinner given to Lord Reading the other night.

The Republican party has an honorable war record. A Democratic President has received from its representatives in the Congress sound counsel and unflinching support. On more occasions than one, when Democratic legislators on Capitol Hill developed signs of truculence, Republicans put through legislation asked for by the President and demanded by the situation. It is idle, therefore, to say that the country has anything to fear from an election which might return a Republican to the Congress from a district at present represented by a Democrat. To say it, is to indict the whole Republican candidacy of disloyalty. The record of the Republicans now in the Congress disproves the indictment, even before it is delivered.

Colonel Roosevelt very frequently says some very foolish things. There is no questioning his loyalty, however, even when he "lets himself out" as he did down in Maine the other night. "It is the duty of the Republican Party", said Colonel Roosevelt in his Portland speech, "to stand like a rock against inefficiency, incompetence, hesitation, and delay no less than against any lukewarmness in serving the common cause of ourselves and our allies." Sometimes the Colonel is given to finding "inefficiency, incompetence, hesitation, and delay" where they do not exist. This statement of principles, however, and of the duty of the Republican party is eminently sound. The same principle and the same duty are recognized by the Democratic party. It is, therefore, difficult

to see what either has to fear from the other as a result of an election required by the Constitution.

Under the political systems of other parliamentary countries general elections may be waived. Under our own, elections must be carried out as they are definitely provided for by the fundamental law of the land. So ingeniously conceived is our Constitution, however, that while a change in the political complexion of the Congress may be effected every two years, only death or impeachment can change the Executive until the term for which he is elected has expired. This condition has sometimes resulted in peace time in predicament. There is no danger whatever of it resulting so in war time. So far, party lines have been obliterated in the Congress. They will undoubtedly continue so until the end of the war.

There would, therefore, appear to be no good reason why the Constitution, rather than Colonel Harvey, should not have its way this year, as it has been allowed to have it for the last one hundred and thirty years. While we gladly admit our admiration of the Colonel's many distinguished and estimable qualities, we are compelled to say that we think his recent novel suggestion something of a slur on both the Democratic and Republican parties.

### A LOTOS DREAM

*(From The Brooklyn Times)*

The unmistakably American writer for the *World* who described the banquet of the Lotos Club, and the even more profound student of the laws and institutions of the United States who prepared a headline for the stirring and striking article the writer produced, distinguished our good friend, Colonel George Harvey, as the chief, the exemplar, the archetype of all the Bolsheviki, in their exuberant interpretation of the speech the Colonel made. Probably no one in all this broad land was more amazed than Colonel Harvey when he read at the top of the first column on the front page of our contemporary, this revolutionary caption: "Keep Wilson In As the President, Colonel Harvey Urges." Nor did his amazement lose its momentum, we venture to say, when he found it printed in black and white that

Original sponsor for President Wilson in 1906, later a predictor of Mr. Wilson's defeat by Justice Hughes, and after Mr. Wilson's election, his bitter critic and lamponer, Colonel Harvey, nevertheless, last night deplored the injection of political partisanship into affairs at Washington, and urged the two great parties reach some agreement whereby Mr. Wilson might retain office without the animosities and expense of a contest at the polls, presumably for the duration of the war.

We confess that when this paragraph assaulted our sense, we cried out, "Colonel, don't!" We prepared rapidly an appeal on behalf of the rights and liberties of our fellow countrymen, and the Constitution in deadly danger, from Phil, old scout, to Philip the day after. We felt rushing up in us a plea to Colonel Harvey to give the matter reconsideration—not in the Lotos Club, but somewhere else.

Fortunately, before we committed this to type, we read on. And on. And brought up, bang, at the end of Colonel Harvey's speech without finding a single reference to the election for a President of the United States, to be held, in accordance with law and custom, in the year 1920.

Having thus followed the lines in our vain quest, we read between the lines. Still the matter of the next Presidential election remained remote and untouched by any thought of Colonel Harvey's. He did speak of the coming Congressional elections. He did say that the legislative branch of government should remain in political harmony with the executive branch. He did urge that this be assured by an agreement of the leaders of both the great political parties to unite on all the present members of Congress, except the few whose disloyalty was easily ascertainable, or already ascertained. "True," said Colonel Harvey, "we must observe the form of an election, but there should be but one issue—loyalty to country, to civilization and to God."

Our concern for the Constitution is relieved. Colonel Harvey does not intend to commit a revolution. He just wants everybody to vote for the Democratic candidates in the coming election, who are already in Congress, or the Republicans who are already in Congress. With the exception of one or two here and there, whose names, doubtless, he will furnish on application. So far as the Colonel is concerned, we shall go right on being a Republic. But our contemporary should realize that the Lotos Club is dangerous except for seasoned veterans who can remain cool under the heaviest artillery fire.

### "FATUOUS NOTIONS OF DUTY AND LOYALTY"

*(From The Evening Sun)*

Colonel George Harvey—like some other contemporary thinkers—has a strange idea of the United States Constitution. He seems to think it is an elastic bag with reversible lining.

His latest simple and easy proposition is that the Congress elections falling due in the early winter of this year should not be held or should be turned into a mere farce, the Constitution and the laws to the contrary notwithstanding, because in his opinion they are not necessary. He launched the idea at a Lotos Club speech on Wednesday evening. He thought the setting aside of the election was a mere matter of arrangement between the leaders of the two political parties. This looks like a neat, modern adaptation of Congressman "Tim" Campbell's famous remark.

Colonel Harvey's rosewater inspiration is quite characteristic of the period. Fatuous notions of duty and loyalty take the place of robust common sense. He fears that an election may be made the occasion of partisan striving. Well, what of it, if partisan rivalry bring out wholesome criticism and healthy competition for popular favor by demonstration of ability to serve?

What could possibly be more welcome to smug self-sufficiency and inefficiency, should they by any remote chance creep into high places, than an "arrangement" that would guarantee them against the acid test of the popular suffrage?

### RHETORIC AND SPILT MILK

*(From The Evening Globe)*

Colonel Roosevelt is unquestionably right in saying that it is by shooting rather than shouting at Germany the war is to be won. Rhetoric has



done good (for a democracy is necessarily a government by talk), but it has done about all the good in the present crisis of which it is capable. The need of the hour is for acts, and, as far as possible, a tongue-tied leadership. Blessed is the man who can control his lips in this crisis and whose energy goes into doing.

But as rhetorical proclamations of purpose and boastful announcements of what is about to be done no longer help much, so unbridled criticism is of slender use. That unwarranted delays have occurred is patent. That the President in many respects has failed to measure up to the ideal is sadly true. But under our form of government we cannot change horses even though there should be desire to do so. The President is in office. This is a fixed fact of the situation. Such being the unalterable condition, it is not easy to see what good comes from railing at his leadership. If milk has been spilt it is not to be recovered by complainings. The President is the centre of national authority and action and he must be supported.

But disregarding the series of admitted mistakes that have been made, Colonel Roosevelt does a great public service by raising his voice to educate public opinion to the need of making preparations on the theory that the war will not be short. In August, 1914, as all can now see, this country was guilty of a great blunder when it failed to enter the war when Belgium was violated. But no one is warranted in complaining of a fellow citizen on this account. As far as we are aware THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW and *The Globe* had a monopoly of the view that neutrality was impossible in the presence of the issue raised. But neither the President nor even Colonel Roosevelt saw the reality, although they both now see that if it had been recognized at once the war would have been over long ago. The colonel's eyes opened within three months, while the President's remained closed for two and a half years, but except in the matter of quicker perception the mistake was the same. Here was an error that really counted and which must not be repeated by assuming that Great Britain, France, and Italy will do our work and that hence there is no reason for America to disturb herself. It is as immoral as it is unwise for us to rely in this way on the sacrifices of our allies. We must show by acts that we are not slackers in the great business of saving civilization.

### WHO FIRST DAMNED WILLIAM?

*(From The Philadelphia Public Ledger)*

We appreciate the kindness of our correspondent who compliments us on having dubbed the Kaiser "William the Damned" in a recent editorial on this page; but credit for having originated the phrase should be given, we believe, to Colonel George Harvey. It's a good one.